

build the SBIRs-Low system anyway. We are working on a technology here with ground-based interceptors that are complementary to the technology we use for theater missile defense systems. Everybody agrees that is a need we need to develop; and it will be proved to be useful, I think, to have a system on the ground which can be tested continually and improved incrementally.

But having said that, having said that, I want to say, I do not think we should be so zealous to deploy any system that we deploy a substandard system that has not been tested and tested rigorously or else we will find ourselves on a rush to failure.

Finally, I think we need to be realistic. We are soon going to get a defense budget from the Pentagon. We are told it could be to \$200 billion to \$300 billion to \$400 billion more than the \$2 trillion we have already provided in the FYDP for the next 6 years. We need to be realistic about not only the acquisition costs but the life cycle costs of a ballistic missile system.

I do not think NMD deserves a trump card in our budget. It is time, I think, that we in the Congress and elsewhere in the government stopped treating BMD, ballistic missile defense, as a political totem. That is what it has become, a political totem like no other weapon system we have ever seen.

It is time for us to start treating this just as any other weapon system. It does not need cheerleaders. It does not need pallbearers, what BMD, what NMD needs is candor. It needs to be held to the same standards of feasibility, cost effectiveness as every other weapon system we buy and deploy.

If we are going to sell this system to others, our allies, our adversaries, our former adversaries, to Russia, we need to have unity or some cohesion among ourselves, bipartisan unity.

I think if we stay within these bounds, we can build that kind of bipartisan consensus. We should never lose sight of this fundamental fact. We have got a rough, rocky relationship with the Russians right now, but we are making progress.

While we can work with Russia, we should work with Russia to secure their missile systems, to secure their nuclear and fissile materials. And bear this in mind, a critical point, through programs like Nunn-Lugar and the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, we have helped to deactivate so far 5,288 Russian warheads, 419 long-range missiles, and 367 silos. These numbers, what we have accomplished under these cooperative programs, dwarf the number of warheads that even the most robust NMD system could have handled or could have stopped.

We have only begun in that effort. We do not want to diminish that effort and leave ourselves less secure rather than more secure, that is why I plead to the President not just for the statement of policy, but also for balance and also ask him to make a bipartisan ef-

fort founded on consensus and not just on the unilateral position that his administration is pursuing.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Dr. Laudis H. Lanford, The Methodist Home for Children and Youth in Macon, Georgia, offered the following prayer:

The Lord be with you, and for our Jewish friends, Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Elohanu, Adonai Echad.

Oh Lord, my God, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth. Your handiwork is to be exalted and praised before the people. How awesome You are in everything and everywhere. Your love for us is greater than the east is from the west, yes greater than the number of stars in the sky and grains of sand along our shores.

Humble us this day, O God, that we might pause and recognize who You are within our lives and reflect upon the bountiful blessings that You bestow upon us.

Forgive us when we have failed to be obedient to You, both in word and deed. And forgive us when we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, O God, when we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. And free us for joyful obedience to You and service to others.

And like Jabez, we call upon You, the God of Israel, saying, O that Thou wouldest bless us indeed, enlarge our coast, that Thine hand might be with us; that Thou wouldest keep us from evil, and that it may not grieve us. Grant, O God, that which we humbly request. Charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, a never dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BARCIA)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BARCIA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST CHAPLAIN, DR. LAUDIS H. LANFORD

(Mr. CHAMBLISS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege and a pleasure for me to have Dr. Laudis H. Lanford as the guest chaplain in the House today. My good friend, Rick Lanford, is vice president for development at the Methodist Home for Children and Youth in Macon, Georgia, where he is affectionately known as "Daddy Rick."

Dr. Lanford is a graduate of Emory University in Atlanta and Candler School of Theology, where he received a Master of Divinity, and the McCormick School of Theology, where he received a Doctor of Ministry.

Rick's love of the Lord is exhibited in his everyday life, but no place more than in his work with the 110 orphaned and abused children at the Methodist Home.

Rick has made a strong commitment to his community and his State. He is chaplain for the Macon City Police, the Bibb County, Monroe County, and Jones' County Sheriff's Department. He is also chaplain for the Georgia Sheriff's Association and serves on the Gang Awareness Task Force Committee.

Dr. Lanford changes lives of young people in our part of the State every day. I am proud to have him here today, but I am even more proud to call him my good friend.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order on Wednesday, May 2, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in this Chamber former Members of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

PENSION REFORM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, retirement is something every American needs to prepare for, but with the prices of everything from college educations to

gasoline as high as they are, putting away money is difficult for many Americans. It is not made any easier by a government that takes about 40 percent away in taxes.

This week, the House is going to vote on a bill to make retirement easier for working Americans. We are going to increase IRA contribution limits from \$2,000 a year to \$5,000. We are going to increase the limit on 401(k) contributions to \$15,000. And we are going to allow people close to retirement an additional \$5,000 in catch-up contributions to their 401(k)'s.

Helping people keep more of their own money so they can invest it and retire comfortably is a cause every Member of this body should support. We have not increased IRA limits in 20 years. This legislation is long overdue.

Yes, Republicans passed this legislation before; but this time we have a President who will sign the bill. This time it will become law. I thank the President for joining us in doing the right thing.

ABOLISH THE IRS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, a government investigation said that the IRS gave, quote-unquote, wrong information 50 percent of the time. In addition, they say one-third of all calls to the IRS go unanswered.

Unbelievable. According to my math, the IRS is upside down about 80 percent of the time. If that is not enough to give your 1040 a hernia, the IRS says, give us more money and we will solve our problems. Beam me up. The IRS does not need more money. Congress has got to abolish the IRS.

A recent national poll says 70 percent of American taxpayers favor the Tauzin-Trafficant 15 percent national sales tax. No more forms, no more tax on capital gains, savings, investment, education, inheritance. Think about it. And the IRS is abolished.

I yield back those stumbling, fumbling, bumbling, nincompoops at the IRS.

SCHOOL CHOICE WORKS

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, children should not be trapped in a failing school where they cannot possibly reach their fullest educational potential. That is why H.R. 1 includes a school choice program that enables parents to send their children to another school, public or private, after 3 years of chronic failure.

Public support for school choice is strong, especially among African Americans. A survey conducted in 1999 by the Joint Center for Political and

Economic Studies found that approximately 60 percent of African Americans favored school choice. According to a bipartisan poll for the National Education Association conducted in February, 63 percent of Americans say they support President Bush's approach to school choice.

Moreover, school choice programs in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Florida have met with significant success. Howard University's Jay P. Greene found that since Florida's A-Plus school choice program began, student test scores have improved across the board. There is evidence that the A-Plus program has compelled failing schools in Florida, now under the threat of losing their students, to improve performance.

It is our responsibility to empower parents to make the right decision for their children's future.

VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

(Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Mr. Speaker, I am here to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of Puerto Rico to find a solution to the situation in Vieques. While we work toward that end, I must bring to your attention recent unfortunate events. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) was more than one of 150 protestors who committed the misdemeanor offense of trespassing on Federal lands. Some 72 hours after being arrested, our colleague was still detained. This after being denied a phone call for more than 24 hours and having spent a night on a rock strewn floor of an abandoned roofless dog kennel in the rain. I am outraged by the treatment of the detainees by Federal authorities and the use of excessive force against peaceful protestors.

I must address those who have used the issue of Vieques to call into question Puerto Rican commitment to the defense of this great Nation and the principles it represents. For over 100 years, Puerto Ricans have served with distinction and paid the ultimate sacrifice for the United States during war time. I quote Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, who said last week, "The patriotism of Puerto Ricans is absolutely certain. Their contribution to our military individually is extraordinary." With the same spirit that Puerto Rican soldiers have defended democracy and justice around the world, today we defend the rise of the more than 9,000 U.S. citizens that live in Vieques.

Vieques is not a partisan issue. It is no longer a Puerto Rican issue. Vieques is an issue of health, environment, and human rights. Paz para Vieques.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE PHIL ENGLISH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The Speaker pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable PHIL ENGLISH, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House, Capitol Building.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Effective April 27, 2001, I hereby resign from the Committee on Small Business. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please ask your staff to call my Administrative Assistant, Bob Holste at 5-5406.

Sincerely,

PHIL ENGLISH,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, April 30, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 1404 of Public Law 99-661 (20 U.S.C. 4703), I hereby appoint the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation: Mr. Ralph M. Hall, Texas.

Yours Very Truly,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. PETRI of Wisconsin; and

Mr. GALLEGLY of California.

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING AUTISM AWARENESS

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to